

MISCELLANEOUS.

On the natural and artificial Fecundation of Ægilops by Triticum.

By M. GODRON.

THE author referred to the researches of M. Fabre upon *Ægilops triticoides*, from which it appears that this grass is produced from seeds of *Ægilops ovata*, and that by cultivation it gradually approaches cultivated wheat. He does not, however, by any means admit the conclusion deduced from this fact by M. Duval, namely that wheat has originated from the *Æ. ovata*, and is nothing but a metamorphosis of the latter plant.

M. Godron, by examining the circumstances under which the *Æ. triticoides* is met with, has arrived at the conclusion that this plant is only an accidental product; it is never seen except on the edges of wheat-fields or in their neighbourhood; its habit resembles that of the varieties of wheat near which it has grown; it possesses beards when growing in the neighbourhood of bearded wheat, but these are rudimentary in places where beardless wheat is cultivated, and it is less fertile than legitimate species. He considers that *Æ. triticoides* exhibits all the characters of a hybrid plant, and that it is the product of the fecundation of *Æ. ovata* by cultivated wheat.

He has, moreover, confirmed this view by direct experiment; the artificial fecundation of *Æ. ovata* by *Triticum vulgare* has given him the two varieties of *Æ. triticoides* which are met with in the South of France. He has also obtained two new hybrid plants,—one by the fecundation of *Æ. ovata* by *Triticum spelta*, the other by the action of the pollen of *Triticum durum* upon *Ægilops triaristata*.—*Comptes Rendus*, July 17, 1854, p. 145.

THE OUNCES.

The *Ounces*, or Tortoise-shell Tigers as they have been called, should form a particular group of Cats, to which the name of *UNCIA* may be attached. They are easily characterized by the great length and thickness of their cylindrical or rather clavate tail, and the marbling of the colours on the fur. They are confined to Asia.

1. *Uncia Irbis*. Felis *Uncia*, Schreber; F. *Pardus*, Pallas. Tibet.
2. *Uncia macroscelis*, Horsf. Sumatra.
3. *Uncia macrosceloides*, Hodgson. India.
4. *Uncia marmoratus*. Felis *marmorata*, Martin; F. *Diardii*, Jardine. Penang.
5. *Uncia Charltoni*. F. *Charltoni*, Gray; F. *Duvaucellii*, Hodgson MSS. *vide* Dr. Cantor. India; Himalaya.—J. E. GRAY.

THE AFRICAN SEAL, HELIOPHOCA ATLANTICA.

I have just received a well-preserved skin and the skeleton of this Seal from Algeria, under the name of *Phoca leporina*. It certainly cannot be the *Phoca leporina* of Lepechin, in Act. Acad. Petrop. 1777, 264. t. 8, 9 = the *Phoca Lepechinii*, Lesson, from the White Sea and the rivers flowing into it, which M. Nilsson considers to be